

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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Public Sector Equality Duty
<p>The equality duty was developed to harmonise the equality duties and to extend it across the protected characteristics. It consists of a general equality duty, supported by specific duties which are imposed by secondary legislation. In summary, those subject to the equality duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act. • Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. • Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Sefton@Work is part of Sefton Council and we adhere to all Council policies.

“Equality Impact Assessments are an important tool in demonstrating how the Council have paid, and are paying, due regard to the public-sector equality duty. Equality assessments form part of the information provided to decision makers within the Council and are available as part of the relevant committee report”.

Sefton.Gov.UK

<https://sefton.gov.uk/your-council/plans-policies/equality-and-diversity.aspx>

This Equality Impact Assessment is specific to the services provided by Sefton@Work.

The assessment is split into the following sections:

Section 1	Describe the Policy/Practice
Section 2	<p>Could there be any implications for a protected characteristic group (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) in this (or the development of) this policy/practice?</p> <p><i>Under the Equality Act (2010) the following are the nine protected characteristics:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Age 2. Disability 3. Gender Reassignment 4. Marriage and Civil Partnership 5. Pregnancy and Maternity 6. Race 7. Religion or Belief 8. Sex 9. Sexual Orientation
Section 3	What are the potential implications or barriers?
Section 4	Evidence of addressing barriers and meeting public duties
Section 5	Outline any changes to be made to policy/practice because of this assessments
Section 6	Progress update on actions required for the named policy/practice

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SECTION 1 - Describe Policy/Practice

What are the aims?

Sefton@Work offers a range of free and accessible job-related services to workless Sefton residents aged 16 years and over (eligibility conditions apply).

Our main office is in Bootle, with outreach locations across the community. Our key role is to help local people who want to take advantage of the current regeneration activities in Sefton by linking their skills to the jobs that are being created locally. To do this we also provide a free recruitment service for employers that helps them to "shop local" for their staff, reducing their recruitment costs and finding them the right person for the job.

We work in partnership other SMBC Departments as well as with agencies including Jobcentre Plus, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Connexions, People Plus and Sefton Adult Community Learning to ensure our service users can access all our vacancies, services and funding available. We also work with colleges, universities and training providers to source a variety of training opportunities. We will refer individuals to specialist agencies for specific advice or signpost to our partners if we are unable to help. Sefton@Work staff are highly qualified and experienced in providing information, advice and guidance services that uphold our commitment to equality of opportunity for all.

To monitor the impact of our services we regularly review monitoring information received from clients and the employers accessing our services. This information is used to assess who is using the service and these monitoring reviews are used to inform future delivery to ensure that the service is widely publicised, inclusive and accessible to everybody who is eligible.

Services on offer include:

For individuals:

To provide information, advice and guidance on employment and training opportunities to workless Sefton residents including:

- First point of contact
- Registration & initial interview
- 1:1 guidance interview
- Group guidance sessions
- Group skills development courses
- To provide financial assistance (eligibility conditions apply) to maximise employability of clients.
- To support Sefton residents with a range of both pre and post employment programmes.
- To promote Sefton@Work services directly to Sefton residents.
- Pre-screening, testing and sifting of job applicants on behalf of employers
- Employability skills training programmes.

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For Employers:

- To provide a comprehensive recruitment and advice service to business including signposting to partner organisations
- Advertisement and promotion of vacancies including apprenticeships
- Assistance with creating job descriptions and person specifications
- Pre-screening, testing and sifting of application forms or CVs
- Assistance with conducting interviews, with interview rooms available at our Bootle office
- Pre-employment training programmes for applicants
- Skills matching of local job-seekers against vacancies
- HR signposting to ensure that recruitment operates within the legal framework
- Referral to partners and other agencies for specialist advice and support

How often is this policy/practice reviewed?

Section 5&6 will be reviewed / updated quarterly during EDD Meetings

Full EqIA will be reviewed annually by the EDD Working Group and republished for consultation

SECTION 2 - Could there be any implications for a protected characteristic group (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) in this (or the development of) this policy/practice?

Age	YES	Gender Reassignment	YES	Pregnancy & Maternity	YES	Religion or Belief	YES	Sexual Orientation	YES
Disability	YES	Marriage & Civil Partnership	YES	Race	YES	Sex/Gender	YES		

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SECTION 3 - What are the potential implications or barriers?

There is sometimes a feeling of nervousness when the topic of equality is raised and this is often due to a lack of knowledge, experience and discussion within the area. There is potential for staff to have a lack of awareness on issues that have an impact on someone who has one or more of the protected characteristics, this could be a negative barrier for that client engaging successfully with the service.

The materials we use may not be representative of people who have one of the protective characteristics.

There could be instances of inappropriate language, behaviour or attitude by public or staff / partners about people who have one of the protected characteristics.

There is a lack of privacy within the Bootle office to disclose personal information and in instances there could be a lack of confidence by clients to disclose what they perceive to be sensitive information.

AGE

- How do we engage with different age groups? Are our communication methods suitable for all ages e.g. email, texts?
- Is our service accessible to different age groups in terms of location and time?
- Our staff may not be representative of the age profile of our clients.
- Clients may have a perception that they are not eligible for the service provided.
- Projects that are specifically targeted to younger clients may inadvertently disadvantage older clients who cannot register on them.
- Employers may indicate a preference for people within an age range.

DISABILITY

- There is the potential for a lack of awareness of disability and health related issues by staff.
- Are we able to assist clients whose disabilities/health conditions prevent them from accessing mainstream services?
- Is the information we provide accessible to clients who have a range of different disabilities or health conditions.
- It could be difficult hearing during group training session and one to one advice and guidance sessions.
- There is limited access to adviser workstations.
- The training room is not accessible for people with mobility issues.
- Employers may suggest that they cannot accommodate people with a disability.

GENDER REASSIGNMENT

- Staff may not be aware of the legal requirements affecting the provision of confidential services to Trans people.
- There is the potential for a lack of awareness of issues faced by people who are undergoing or have transitioned gender by staff. Do staff feel empowered to communicate effectively with Trans clients?

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- Our records (paper based and electronic) may not be fully reflective of the gender identity of a Trans client.
- Employers may need assistance and guidance to help them to understand potential issues facing trans people at interview or within the workplace.
- Do we operate a zero-tolerance approach to transphobia and Trans related harassment among staff, clients, partners and the community in which we are based?
- Do we challenge negative myths and stereotypes about Trans people?

MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

- Does our service treat marriage and civil partnership equally?

PREGNANCY & MATERNITY

- Do we support breastfeeding mothers or parents with children?
- Do we offer flexible appointments for clients with family commitments?
- Do we offer flexible, family friendly practices for staff?
- Do employers avoid employing women of childbearing age or with young children

RACE

- Our staff is not representative of local ethnic makeup.
- Customer's first language may not be English leading to difficulty in accessing services.
- Lack of awareness of cultural traditions / boundaries by staff.
- Do we operate a zero-tolerance approach to racism among staff, clients, partners and the community in which we are based?
- Do we challenge negative myths and stereotypes about different racial and ethnic groups?
- Do employers indicate discriminatory practices during the recruitment process?

RELIGION OR BELIEF

- Staff may not be representative of a wide range of religious beliefs.
- Do we recognise when customers cannot access our service due to religious days / festivals.
- When servicing meetings or customer focus groups do we consider dietary requirements due to religious beliefs.
- Do employers avoid the recruitment of people of belief, for example, people that may need a prayer space?

SEX

- Staff not representative of local gender breakdown.
- Do our services consider that men and women may articulate different needs and aspirations?
- Do employers suggest a preference for a particular gender?

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SEXUAL ORIENTATION

- There is the potential for a lack of awareness of the issues facing clients who identify as LGB.
- Do we operate a zero-tolerance approach to homophobia and biphobia among staff, clients, partners and the community in which we are based?
- Do we challenge negative myths and stereotypes about people with different sexual orientation?
- Do employers need advice to ensure that they don't discriminate towards people with a different sexual orientation, including a zero tolerance to "teasing" in the work place?

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SECTION 4 - Evidence of addressing barriers and meeting public duties

The Equality Policy Statement is displayed within our office and available on our website.

Staff & Colleagues

All staff at Sefton@Work have had Equality and Diversity training, either delivered by 3rd party suppliers or via e-learning packages delivered by Sefton Council. Training delivered has included:

- Visual Awareness Impairment Training
- LGBT Cultural Awareness Training
- Employer Liaison Team staff have professional qualifications in HR (CIPD).

A training log is maintained and regularly updated and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

Employees are empowered to challenge any inappropriate attitude, comments or behaviour by clients, staff and employers.

Employees have yearly Performance and Development Review meetings with their Line Manager, as well as target review meetings throughout the year.

We have access to a booklet “What’s it got to do with you?” that explains why we collect Equality & Monitoring information that we can share with clients.

Inter faith calendar is produced and circulated to staff.

Employees are encouraged to maintain links with specialist partners such as Embrace, In Trust, Sefton Equalities Partnership and attend meetings with them as appropriate or required.

Sefton@Work promotes fair recruitment and selection of staff through Sefton Council policies and procedures. Sefton Council collects statistical workforce data on Equality & Diversity.

Service Manager – Employment & Learning attends Corporate Equality Group and cascades information to Sefton@Work.

Client Facing

All S@W publicity materials should contain representative comments or statements when appropriate. We will ensure that all images are generic and relate to the service we provide, or the location we provide it.

Clients with visual impairment health conditions can be signposted to our specialist partner Henshaw’s:

<https://www.henshaws.org.uk/about-us/>

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Alternative delivery of information/guidance is available.

Sefton@Work gathers regular feedback from our Clients. A Feedback questionnaire is collated and evaluated every five weeks. The results are published on our website (www.seftonatwork.net). One of the questions asked on the form is:

“I was treated fairly and without discrimination”

Clients are made aware of customer feedback and complaints procedure on first contact. As well as displaying the Equality Policy Statement we also display our “Commitment to you” poster that details what clients can expect of our services.

Our welcome signage includes several languages.

If clients speak or understand no English we refer them to SACL, Hugh Baird for ESOL classes.

Customer Service Excellence Award & Certificate and Matrix Standard Chartermark are displayed in our office.

We endeavour to promote good news stories about clients who have gained work or training in non-traditional roles to challenge gender stereotyping.

Employer & Partners

Sefton@Work endeavours to have a strong working relationship with specialist agencies that have a greater understanding of the protective characteristics including (but not limited to):

- Sefton Equalities Partnership
- Embrace
- In Trust
- Sefton Adult & Community Learning
- Sefton in Mind
- RNIB
- ACAS
- Henshaw’s
- Action on Hearing Loss

Employers are guided through their recruitment process to avoid any recruitment practice, including the wording of an advertisement that could be deemed as discriminatory.

Employer feedback questionnaire is collated quarterly.

Employer Liaison Team offers informal HR advice and guidance to employers as requested or appropriate. We make employers more aware of resources available if employing a person with a disability or health condition

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as part of our recruitment process (e.g. Access to Work grants) and referrals to specialist agencies.

We advertise our opportunities on our website, in window display as well as with a range of partner organisation that work with disadvantaged groups. We follow fair recruitment and selection procedures.

Statistical data

Sefton@Work has contractual obligations to gather personal and sensitive information as part of our externally funded projects. All data collected complies with General Data Protection Regulations.

Unless there is a service delivery need to show information relating to the protected characteristics against an identified client record (e.g. age to determine client eligibility for specific contracts) information relating the clients protected characteristics will be non-visible to staff after initial data entry. MI system Superusers will have access for report writing purposes. All reports relating to client statistics are anonymised.

The Equality, Diversity & Dignity Working Group will monitor equality statistical data collected to ensure that our service remains fully inclusive.

Premises

Wheelchair access and toilet facilities are available at our main office in Bootle; there is no access to our training room on the first floor. We have identified an appropriate workstation with easy access for wheelchair users on the ground floor. Accessible alternative venues are available If we identify a client has mobility needs prior to a training course commencing.

We display signs in reception advising clients that if they wish to discuss something private or in confidence they can request a meeting in the private office located on our ground floor. They are also informed of this during their 1:1 interviews.

Chartermarks

Sefton@Work currently hold the following Chartermarks/Awards:

- Customer Service Excellence
- Matrix Accreditation for Information Advice & Guidance

This demonstrates our good practice and commitment to running an inclusive service.

Sefton Council participates in the Disabled Confident Scheme (Nov 16) and currently holds a level 2 award, which is a Disability Confident Employer as well as having achieved the Navajo Chartermark for LGBT inclusivity.

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SECTION 5 – Outline any changes to the policy/practice or actions to taken because of this assessment			
Reference	Action	Date to be completed	Officer/Group Responsible
1	Review marketing materials to ensure they are suitable.	Ongoing	Marketing
2	Review Equality monitoring statistics.	Ongoing	MI & EDD
3	Review EDD training for staff.	Ongoing	EDD
4	Attend any appropriate meetings in relation to E&D.	Ongoing	All staff
5	Review facilities/premises.	Ongoing	EDD
6	Ensure opportunities are circulated to the widest audience.	Ongoing	ELT
7	Maintain links with organisations that have specialism in protected characteristics.	Ongoing	All staff
8	Hold regular feedback sessions with clients/employers.	On Going	SLT
9	Promote Navajo Chartermark to colleagues and partners.	On Going	All staff
10	Enquire about any potential barriers to accessing premises when arranging initial appointments.	On going	All staff
11	Incorporate “What’s it got to do with you” leaflet with Welcome Packs	01/08/19	KK/GW
12	Ensure Equality Stats on MI system are only visible on initial data entry (unless required for service delivery).	01/08/19	GB
13	Ensure gender options on Evolutive are updated.	01/08/19	GB
14	Investigate options for portable access ramp.	01/08/19	EDD
15	Investigate staff training re: gender fluidity/non-binary status.	01/08/19	EDD

Name of staff member completing this EQIA	Gary Byrne		
Signature			
Date of completion	30/04/2019		
Date of review	Action Points to be reviewed quarterly		

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SECTION 6 - Progress update on actions required for the named policy/practice				
Reference	Progress of Action	Completed Y/N	Update Date	Officer/Group Responsible
1				
2				
3				
4				
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11				
12				